

News from the

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



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<http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/index.html>

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NJDA Offers Help to Farmers as Hurricane Season Arrives *Department Serves as Clearinghouse of Information for Flood and Storm Relief*

(TRENTON) – With the onset of the East Coast’s hurricane season, the New Jersey Department of Agriculture reminds farmers that they can contact the Department with questions or concerns regarding flooding or other weather-related problems on their farms.

“This time of year can present many challenges to farmers from heavy thunderstorms and the remnants of hurricanes and tropical storms making their way up the coast,” said Secretary of Agriculture Charles M. Kuperus. “Last year, we saw two major incidents of flooding – one in the Burlington-Camden County area and the other in the state’s Northwestern counties – in which farmers were impacted by heavy rains and wind. We are prepared to respond to any similar incidents this year.”

After contacting local emergency personnel for immediate help, any farmer seeking information on help with weather-related problems can call the Department at (609) 292-5531. If leaving a message during non-business hours, please include a full telephone number with area code and a brief but detailed description of the problem.

Also, the Department reminds farmers of the following numbers to call for specific issues resulting from flooding.

Property Damage – The Emergency Conservation Program Fund is a 75-percent cost-share that can be used for debris removal and for restoring permanent fencing, terraces, diversions, irrigation systems and other conservation installations that are damaged as part of a natural disaster. It is administered by the Farm Service Agency, which can be reached at (609) 298-3446 in New Jersey.

Dams – Farmers are eligible for Department of Environmental Protection Dam Repair loans at 2 percent interest. No permits are required for the repair of any dam used for agricultural purposes within the Pinelands special agricultural production areas. Farm dams elsewhere in the Pinelands may also be exempt from DEP permitting requirements. Please call the DEP Dam Safety Loan Program office at (609) 984-0859 to determine whether a specific dam repair does or does not require a permit. Any dam repair work designed and installed by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) **does not** require a DEP permit if the contributing drainage area to the dam is less than one square mile.

Livestock Issues – Because of standing water, increased mosquito populations and the subsequent possibility of an increase in West Nile Virus infection rates are a concern. Typically, it takes 10 days after a storm for a mosquito “bloom.” Increased mitigation efforts now will help reduce that risk. Keep horses and other livestock away from areas where mosquitoes will breed. Also, make sure animals are properly vaccinated now. Double-check all feed for possible contamination. For more information, call the NJDA’s Division of Animal Health at (609) 292-3965.

Crop Insurance – Growers with crop insurance must provide written notice to their crop insurance agent within 72 hours of discovery of damage or loss. Growers with questions can call the Garden State Crop Insurance Education Initiative at 1-800-308-2449.

A “Disaster Handbook” compiled by the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences at the University of Florida offers much helpful information for recovering from a weather event. It can be accessed on-line at <http://disaster.ifas.ufl.edu/>. It is also available through all county offices of the Rutgers Cooperative Extension.